1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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POLYGYNY

595 In reconstructing the past from legends and traditions one gains the impression that monogamy was general, but that several men, owing to their power or wealth, could afford many wives. The last supporters of paganism were certain chiefs who, having several wives, hesitated to become Christian lest they be obliged to part with them (230, vol. 6, p. 565). However, not all the chiefs availed themselves of this privilege and at the time of European contact there were only a few persons with several mates. No conclusion can be drawn from this situation since at that period there were just half as many women as men. I was told that the chiefs or persons of rank (*tangata honui*) were allowed several wives who were supposed to live in separate houses to avoid fighting—this last detail is perhaps a modern rationalization. Iri, Victoria's grandfather, had eight wives. A man generally resided with the first wife (*vie rae*), but sometimes several favorite wives lived with him. Viriamo, Tepano's mother, had been the second wife of a man of the Miru tribe (194, p. 227).

What truth there is in Thomson's statement (215, p. 465) that a husband could sell or lease his wife to another for a stated term I do not know. This may be an allusion to polyandric habits, as in the Marquesas. In the legend of Hamea and Raa, the two brothers live successively with the same woman. Some natives are said not to be very particular about their wives' adulteries with foreigners if some profit is to be gained.

MARRIAGE CEREMONY

[582] Young men now marry at about the age of 20; girls marry a little earlier.
585 If they have the mutual consent of their parents, a ceremony is performed at the church under the direction of the catechist. As the marriage is not considered entirely valid until it is blessed by a priest, they usually wait for the coming of the frigate *Baquedano* to have all unions consecrated by the chaplain. I have numerous proofs of the importance attached to the parents' con-
584 sent for marriage, but Roussel (190, pp. 465-466), who lived many years among the natives in the early sixties of the nineteenth century, asserts: "Marriages were contracted without consulting the will of the parents. They were decided by inclination." Roussel made the same statement to Palmer (168, p. 281) and to Gana (86, p. 39).

583 Although they visited the island at the same time and had access to the same source of information, Thomson and Cooke make contradictory state-
[584] ments concerning the formalities of marriage. Thomson (215, p. 465) says, "the betrothal is conducted by parents, the relations of the female paying a stipulated amount generally in food to be consumed by the friends at the feast given to celebrate the event." Cooke (54, pp. 716-717) states that the bride-

1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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groom's parents had to pay for the bride and that the amount of the purchase price was the object of lengthy bargaining. On the wedding day a great feast was held at the bride's house and "everything edible, that is to say the price of the girl," was consumed. After this ceremony the bride was taken to the house of her husband.

Purchase price never existed on Easter Island and the apparent discrepancies between these two authors are easily solved by first-hand information obtained from present natives:

> When young people married, the family of the bridegroom gave fowls and food for the feast, but the family of the bride could help by making an earth oven of their own. The husband's father presented food to the wife's father, who gave him more food in return. At the wedding many fowls were killed and eaten. The brothers of the bridegroom's father sometimes helped in bringing food. It is unlikely that the couple to be married helped prepare the banquet.

Even though much of the past has been forgotten, it is obvious that marriage ceremonies were never surrounded by a complicated ritual. When old Viriamo married her first husband " . . . there was no ceremony of any kind, no new clothes nor feasting; her father simply took her to her new home and handed her over" (194, p. 227). This was probably an exception. Normal weddings required the celebration of a feast with the usual distribution of food. Probably most of the food consumed on this occasion was supplied by the family of the bridegroom, but the bride's family contributed its share. The food was accumulated around a conical stage made of a bundle of *hau* poles (190, p. 466), evidently similar to the conical *akari* of the Maori which served the same purpose (20, vol. 1, p. 381). The young married couple presided at the feast and took part in the meal. After all the food was eaten, the marriage was considered valid (190, p. 466).

Status of Women

Modern Easter Island women seem to be well treated and to have considerable influence. They insist on expressing their opinions in all discussions but probably would not dare to resist openly the will of their husbands. Tepano's wife, Maria Ika, was in our employ but left because her husband wished her to do so. She expressed her regret but said, "I am a woman, I must always obey." I know of numerous women who were beaten because of disobedience.

Most family troubles I heard of were provoked by the infidelity of the husband and the anger of the wife. However, there are some couples with equal and mutual love. A particularly striking example of conjugal fidelity and affection is that of Rosario Arencibe Teao who followed her husband into the leper settlement when he was confined there. At the time she entered the settlement she was in perfect health, but she contracted the disease many years later.

2:Ferdon A-5 (1956) 1957
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836 by the people as a necking party is in the United States. There is seldom, if ever,
any secrecy surrounding such momentary love matches, and whereas the girls come
[522] in for a certain amount of joking from the older people, it is the boys who bear
the greater brunt of the jokes. A term commonly heard in such joking sessions is
that of *muy tatani* (very devilish) and it is used to describe the feelings of a young
[797] man or woman toward his, or her, partner. Such premarital affairs are regarded
as quite normal and natural, in spite of the nominal acceptance of the Catholic
[882] faith, and, as my workmen once pointed out, a young man is naturally *muy toro*
and must have his girls and stay up late at night. However, when a person reaches
the age of about thirty he is described as being only *medio torito*.

848 Should a child be born out of wedlock there is never a curse on mother, child,
or father. On Easter Island, as in many parts of the rural world, a large family
[842] is looked upon as highly desirable since the children can eventually help with the
work. With this concept well entrenched in the culture of the island, a girl bring-
ing a child with her into marriage constitutes an advantageous acquisition.

431 A side light on the problems of courting comes from a statement made by
836 Martin Rapu, one of our foremen. Martin reflected that when he was young and
unmarried (he is now twenty-two and was married at twenty) he changed girls
often and it was much trouble and quiet costly, for he had to give each new girl
[581] presents from time to time. Finally his father advised him to get married, for he,
the father, could no longer afford the gifts that Martin needed each time he
changed girls. Martin then added that he had found married life a lot calmer and
more peaceful than that of his premarital years.

584 When a boy has finally decided upon the girl he wants to marry he may ask
for her through her parents in one of two ways. He may go personally to the girl's
father or mother and ask for the girl. If he is accepted he returns home immedi-
ately and notifies his father of the fact. The father then goes to the house of the
girl's parents and the two families give a party to which their respective extended
family relatives are invited. Both families join in furnishing liquor and food for the
affair, though the boy's father may go through the ceremony of pouring the first
[583] round of drinks. At this time there appears to be a small exchange of gifts be-
tween the families, apparently no more than a token exchange, for Jorge mentioned
that a little money might change hands, but in telling of it he did not seem to
regard it as much of anything.

The second method of arranging a marriage is for the youth to tell his father
of the girl he wishes to marry. It then becomes the father's duty to go to the
house of the girl and, bringing with him a little liquor, ask the father or mother
of the girl for permission for his son to marry her. Consent appears to be primarily

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up to the parents, though Jorge mentioned that other relatives might be consulted at this time. However, such consultation cannot be long extended, for consent — or rejection — is given very shortly. If accepted, the father of the boy immediately pours some drinks and both families and their relatives are sent for and a party is given that very day. 584

MARRIAGE

When a couple is about to marry, the father of the bridegroom designates one of his brothers to collect presents from the family. Those who are supposed to give at this time are the father's brothers and sisters, cousins, *compadres*, and certain individuals related by marriage.[3] Of considerable interest is the fact that the male members of the father's *tumu*, or — to use the islander's present Spanish term — *aliados*, must give presents at this time.[4] Although the *tumu* no longer operates to the extent that marriage must be within the *tumu*, though such is looked upon with high favor, its continued existence is clearly recognized in that not only do its members give marriage gift-exchange presents to any one of their members whose son or daughter is being married, but they are automatically invited to any feasts given by any member of the *tumu*. 583 602 613 [582]

The gifts collected at this time, which may consist of foodstuffs, cows, pigs, cloth, or money, are turned over to the bridegroom's father who then invites the bride's father and her extended family to a feast, and they come bringing guitars for singing and dancing. After the feast the bridegroom's father presents to the bride's father the accumulated gifts his brother has collected. At such a time the gifts may often be spread out in the form of a boat. 583 584

Some time after the bride's father has received his gifts, one of his brothers or sisters is designated to collect gifts from the bride's family which are then turned over to the bride's father. It is now his turn to invite the bridegroom's father and extended family to his home for a feast, after which the collected gifts are presented to the bridegroom's father. In all of this, the engaged couple receive nothing, for, as Jorge pointed out, when they get married they will have each other and that is sufficient.

Although common law marriages unaccompanied by ceremony still exist, the 583 585

3 I was unable to determine precisely which relatives by marriage must present gifts, in that I found out too late that Easter Islanders use the Spanish word *cuñado*, or brother-in-law, loosely to include husbands of cousins and even nieces, not all of whom are required to give presents.

4 A *tumu* is a group of lineages into which, in former times, a man might marry. The *tumu* to which the Tepano family belongs, for example, consists of the Tepano, Pakomio, and Paoa lineages. [582]

2:Ferdon A-5 (1956) 1957
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great majority follow a formalized pattern. At the present time two Chilean-derived marriage ceremonies take place, a civil marriage on a Saturday and a Catholic church marriage on Sunday. However it is on Saturday, after the civil wedding, that the bridegroom's father gives a large feast for both of the extended families involved in the match. It is at this time that the gifts received by the bride's and bridegroom's fathers are formally distributed among their respective families. To aid in this division of the spoils, a "secretary" is appointed to see that each relative receives a gift of value proportionate to the one he originally gave to the gift exchange. All my informants agreed that the marriage gift-exchange ceremony is a period of great and jovial rivalry to see which family has given the biggest and most valuable gifts.

On Sunday evening after the church wedding a general party for the couple is given, and it is at this time that the bridegroom sings a specially composed song to his bride and she, in turn, sings her special song to him, each going to the other's house for the purpose. It is the best of these songs that have been maintained on Easter Island and today compose the more modern corpus of true Easter Island songs.

Upon the marriage of a young couple they are free to live in the home of either of their parents, or they may build a home of their own. Actually, living with one or another of the parents is a virtual necessity, owing to the fact that all building materials are brought from the continent once a year by the Chilean Navy and the supply has never caught up with the demand. Further hindering construction is the government's rationing system which, though abundantly fair, allows no single family to buy in one year all the material needed to build a home. This system has resulted in the development, or maintenance, of an extended family pooling system in which, if the family is large enough and each draws his rightful ration of building materials, a house can often be built from the total extended family allotment for a single year. It might also be mentioned that in the construction of such a house, any, or all, of the extended family may be called upon for aid.

Although the building of a house is a problem, a young couple as yet has no difficulty in obtaining land. At the present time the Chilean government allots the use-rights to five hectarias of terrain to each newly married couple. Formerly an Easter Islander could own his land outright, but this is no longer true, the Chilean government retaining title to all land, owing, apparently, to the strategic nature of the island in the event of war.

One of the more interesting facets of Easter Island marriage is the position of the father-in-law in the life of the married couple. Of the two male parents-in-law, it is the girl's father who appears to hold the dominant position of power in the

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
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461 to lie around and gossip, to smoke, to sit and "moon" over the industry, the greatness, and the monuments of his ancestors, the degeneracy and decadence of his race, perhaps, and his own utter and ineradicable worthlessness individually. Natural covetousness and desire for the possession of lucre may tempt him to serve the white man for a time, but he soon tires of his work, which speedily becomes irksome to him. And while he may exert himself a trifle occasionally, in the way of fishing, or in the cultivation of an 8 by 10 patch of sugar cane, taro, and sweet potato, it is only as a matter of necessity, to keep body and soul together, and he infinitely prefers idleness and the enjoyment of his *dolce far niente*.

273 Intoxicating drinks of any description, even kava, so common in the islands to the westward, are unknown to these people, and neither do Mr. Salmon, or the other foreign residents, keep any liquors in their possession. While, therefore, it is true that here, as elsewhere among uncivilized peoples, contact with the European has been attended by their gradual extinction, it can not be said that all the usual factors obtain in this instance, since neither the venereal poison nor intoxicants exist on the island. Consequently, these can not be assigned as causes of the decadence of the Rapa Nuis. Deportation, forced and voluntary,
161 smallpox, and customs, elsewhere mentioned in this paper, will explain their gradual extinction, in part, at least, while the fact remains that their seemingly inevitable destiny was vastly accelerated when the white man set foot upon their mysterious, mid-ocean island.

304 The rite of circumcision, so common in the other islands, is unknown here, nor does their language possess an equivalent word.

162 As may be inferred from the preponderance of the male over the
562 female portion of the community the latter are in demand, and the sup-
595 ply not being equal to it, the women are a source of great solicitude; much
589 consideration is shown them; they are fairly well taken care of, and are treated, generally, with kindness, not to say affection. Polygamy, under the circumstances, does not, of course, exist and celibacy, it may be said, only from necessity, since there are not enough females.

595 While it can not be truthfully claimed that polyandry, in the strict acceptation of the term, obtains among them, they have a custom which very nearly approaches that practice, as will appear presently.

584 At the present day the ceremonies of the church, measurably at least, govern their marriages; nevertheless the ancient custom still prevails, to a considerable extent, and in a few words it is this: When a boy arrives at the age of, say 12 years, his father looks about him for a suitable life-companion, of the opposite sex, for the young hopeful. Having discovered one to his liking the father proceeds to interview the parents of the damsel, who is perhaps of the same age, or more
584 likely younger than her prospective lord, declares his intentions matri-
● 583 monial and negotiations are then entered into. After a due amount of haggling as to the value of the girl, during which the parents of the

10: Cooke D-5 (1886) 1899
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latter endeavor to "bull" the market, while those of the boy do their utmost to "bear" the commodity under appraisement, the price is finally agreed upon and the bargain is concluded, the consideration being a specified quantity of sugar cane, taro, sweet potatoes, chickens, etc., to be paid the girl's parents. A day is then fixed upon; relatives and friends are notified; due preparations are made at the girl's house, to which the articles mentioned have meanwhile been sent, and at the time appointed, all interested being present, a grand feast is held, at which, as a rule, everything edible, that is to say the price of the girl, is consumed. That important business being finished, bride and groom retire to the residence of the parents of the latter, by whom the bride is adopted as their own child, and thenceforth the parties are husband and wife.

The cares and the obligations of matrimony, as well as of parentage, sit lightly upon the Rapa Nuis. Although marital infidelity may be rare, it is stated that a husband will, in consideration of a certain quantity of produce, make over all right in his wife to another for a specified period, at the expiration of which time he will take back the wife and she again becomes the partner of his joys and sorrows. This might be called polygamy in another form.

Fixing the average at three gives, I think, a very fair estimate of the number of children to a family, and the lack of fecundity among them will readily be explained by the early child marriages, customs, habits of life, intermarriage, and the degeneracy of the race.

In these people the lower part of the body and extremities were found well developed, and in the women more so than would be supposed from their slight physique. In the latter the skin was lighter in color in the unexposed than in the exposed parts. The hips are broad and full, the thighs large, round, and firm, and legs straight and tapering to the ankles, which, with the feet, were small and delicate. They are but sparingly hirsute. The breasts of those examined were moderately large, full, round, firm, and carried well up on the chest. The nipples were quite small, but with good-sized areola, which latter presented, in some instances, that peculiar puffy, translucent appearance, as though filled with serum, often seen throughout the other Pacific Islands. The Rapa Nuis differed from these in that the areola was not so large nor of so deep a tint, the writer having seen them in other islands covering half the breast and nearly black in color.

The skin of the woman examined, where not covered with tattooing, was nearly as light in color as that of the average brunette, and very fine, smooth, soft, and delicate.

There seems to be no doubt that, with all their apparent mildness and good nature, the baser passions and savage instincts of these people are strong within them, and instances of inhumanity occasionally crop out among them. A case which came under the notice of Dr. Whitaker was that of a woman who was suffering from spinal deformity, the result